

T H E
D R A P E R ' s R e m a r k s

On the Late

I M P O R T A T I O N

Of New-Coin'd

E n g l i s h H a l f - P e n c e ,

And the Consequences thereof to this

K I N G D O M .

W I T H

M o d e s t R E A S O N S for the **L i b e r t y**
of a **M I N T , &c.**

H U M B L Y

O f f e r e d to the **C o n s i d e r a t i o n** of
those at the **H E L M .**

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T H E
 Draper's Remarks
 On the Late
 Importation, &c.

THE Liberty of a Mint to coin Brass or Copper HALF-PENCE among us, has entertain'd our Thoughts of a long Time past; last Session of Parliament, the whole Nation was then full of mighty Expectations (from the Wisdom and known Zeal of our Law-Makers) that something would be done for us in that Affair.

Many strong Arguments, supported by Precedents of all the Trading Nations in *Europe*, have been offered, to shew how justly our Expectations in that Particular was founded; But as we have been hitherto disappointed, and the **EVIL** still growing heavier upon us, it were to be wish'd that something were done to relieve us. The Cries of our Poor, nay, all Degrees of People among us, do now earnestly call on those at the Helm for Relief.

I cannot here avoid taking Notice of the untimely Zeal of some Gentlemen among us, in thinking to relieve our Wants, by Importing large Parcels of new-coin'd *English* Half-pence, as has been done some Months ago, and I believe will be repeated over again. But I would beg leave to observe, that this is running from one Extream into another; for I would ask those Sagacious Gentle-

men, why we so warmly oppos'd the Introduction of *WOOD's* Half-Pence: Was it the Baseness of the Coin we found fault with, or the terrible Apprehensions we were under, to open a Gap to a Foreign Manufacture of that kind, that would not be in our Power to stop when we pleased? The latter, it is plain, was chiefly our Case, and what justly rais'd the Spirit of the whole Nation, to guard against the impending *EVIL*, such Goods not being like other Commodities, that we could shift off and on as we pleased; and must own, had I not been fully convinced of those Gentlemens Probity, I should be apt to think, the Importation aforesaid, honestly calculated, to put us out of all Hopes, of obtaining the Liberty of a Mint to Manufacture those Things among our selves.

I would further observe, that as this is a National Affair, of a nicer Nature than some do possibly apprehend, ought to be left to the Wisdom of our State-Physicians, under whose Consideration and wise Conduct, those Things ought more immediately to fall, particular Persons ought not (so far) to interfere, for ill-tim'd Zeal has often prov'd prejudicial; and as we may now reasonably hope, that by a Proper and Parliamentary Application, we may be allowed the Liberty of Manufacturing small Change at Home, under such Restrictions and Regulations, as may best secure us from the many Inconveniencies, that necessarily result, in having 'em done for us Abroad, a Privilege which is not deny'd to any Country, State, or Province in *Europe*, nor, I believe, in the whole World.

It has been objected by some Sage Gentlemen, that while we Import good *English* Half-Pence, we can be no Loosers, because it is in our Power to return 'em back when we please. Those Politicians, who see no farther into this Affair, (I must beg leave to say) are but short-sighted: It is plain, that a Traffick of that kind cannot end to our Advantage; for allowing, that what we have already imported of that Coin be good, and possibly may continue so for some Time; yet is it not very reasonable to believe, that some future Cargoes will, or may, be coin'd, and calculated singly for our Use, as it is done for the Plantations abroad, and a considerable Premium, or

Draw-

Draw-back allowed the Exporter, agreeable to Value. Are we sure that no Mercenary Importer will take this Trade in hand, as all the Ports in the Kingdom, will be equally Open and Ready to receive this Foreign Manufacture, when once they have a Precedent laid down by this great *CAPITOL*; who then will or can be a Judge of the Quality or Quantity: The *QUANTITY*, I say, being what we ought chiefly to guard against; for when once dispers'd among us, we could easier get rid of a Pestilence, or put a Stop to the Increase of 'em, considering the active Disposition of Men now a Days in those Affairs.

It is to be consider'd farther, that though the want of such small Change, be a Loss and Obstruction to a Trading People, yet too much of 'em, and *BAD ONES*, would be another Extream, infinitely of worse Consequence than the other, and would prove the more unsupportable if oblig'd to purchase them from Abroad; no doubt, we should by that means be soon eased of the little Gold and Silver we have left, Coiners at Home, as well as Abroad, would furnish us with another sort of Specie, more properly adapted to the Poverty of our Country.

The manufacturing of Brass or Copper Coin among us, wou'd in another Respect be of great Advantage to this poor Nation, as the Ore, or Material is to be found at Home, Fifty or Sixty Thousand Pounds worth of which so manufactured, wou'd not only employ great Numbers of our Poor, but wou'd also be an Addition of so much to our Capital Stock, or running Cash, instead of taking so much from us.

Another Point I wou'd beg Leave to Remark is, that tho' it has been practis'd, to grant Patents to particular Persons on those Occasions; yet such Grants, if found Inconvenient, ought (like other Temporary Laws) to be discontinued, and if I mistake not, there precedes all Patents, a Writ of Inquiry, call'd *quo ad Damnum*, shewing, that such was not to be granted, if found prejudicial, even to particulars, much less the Society at large.

Upon this honest Footing wou'd I argue, that as all Patents are attended with considerable Expences to the Patentee, (Large Premiums) it is natural to believe, that

that he must be reimburs'd, with an &c. for himself, how much, is not easily calculated. Time and his own active Genius will soon shew him ; but it is obvious, that such Reimbursements must be entirely extracted out of the Goods or Coin Manufactur'd, consequently deficient so much in the real and intrinsic Value. But the worst Evil of all is (as before observed) that no possible Assurance can be had or expected, from any private Person, to secure us from the many Inconveniencies, was but too justly apprehended on those Occasions.

Therefore, I say, cou'd we be favour'd with the Liberty of Cooking those Things our own Way at Home, and under the immediate Directions of proper Persons to be appointed, it wou'd be of singular Advantage to poor *Ireland*, for the Reasons aforesaid ; and additional to this Favour, the Liberty of coining small Silver ; as Two-penny, Four-penny, and Six-penny Pieces, and no higher ; or small Silver, with a strong alloy of Copper, that may remain among us, as in *Holland*, and other trading Countries abroad. All the Provinces in *France*, great and small, have their particular Mints for that Purpose. But as Cases stand with us at present, we are an Exception to all the trading Nations upon the Face of the Earth.

It may be a Subject of Merriment to some, to hear those Things so often mentioned, which they look upon, so unlikely, nay, impossible to obtain, and that we have hitherto been dreaming in vain to that Purpose ; but for my part, I must differ in Opinion with those Ill-natur'd Gentlemen, nor can it enter into my Thoughts, but the want of Redress, in many Inconveniencies we labour under, is chiefly owing to the want of proper and timely Application. For what Pleasure can it be to our Brethren in *England*, to see us labour under unsupportable Difficulties ? especially in those our little Domestick Concerns, that do not at all interfere with their Interest ; surely, the Welfare of a People, who are by Inclination as well as Interest, so remarkably attach'd, to our present HAPPY CONSTITUTION, cannot be thought indifferent, to that wise Nation. We don't here contend for any Privileges in Trade or Foreign Commerce, but Things, that upon the strictest Enquiry, wou'd be found

no ways prejudicial to the People of *England*. I won't say how far particular Persons may be interested or prejudiced against us, but that the Prosperity of *Ireland*, wou'd be the Interest of the *English* Nation in general. No one Argument in Politicks, (according to the present Situation of Affairs) cou'd be more strongly supported.

I refer to an excellent Treatise on the Trade and Manufactures of this Kingdom, wrote many Years since by Col. *Richard Lawrence*, a worthy ingenious *English* Gentleman, of most extensive Knowledge in Trade, and the Affairs of *Ireland* in particular. He there takes Notice, that it is the undoubted Interest of *England*, that *Ireland* shou'd be able, not only to Support it self in Peace, but to defend it self in War, which nothing but promoting its Trade and Wealth will do. I beg Leave to Transcribe one Remark of his on that Head.

His Words are these.

' And what *Ireland* cannot do in order to it's Safety, *England* must supply, to prevent it's own Danger; for if ever an Enemy shou'd Surprize and Possess *Ireland*, especially the *FRENCH*, *England* must then maintain a greater standing Army to secure themselves, than wou'd preserve *Ireland*, if employ'd in its Defence; and if the *FRENCH*, who have already the opposite Coast and Harbours from *Dunkirk* to *Brest*, ever obtain *Ireland*, they will then surround three Parts of four of *England*, and a great Part of *Scotland*, so near, that in a few Hours, they may Invade what Part they please; which wou'd necessitate *England*, to be at the great Charge of a considerable Fleet and standing Army, and the Invader with two ordinary Squadrons of Ships, one at *Brest*, and the other at *Baltimore*, *Bantry*, or any of those bold western Harbours, wou'd so distress the Trade of *England*, a Ship shou'd with much Difficulty pass Southward, without a great Convoy; and then being possess'd of the *WOOL* of *Ireland*, wou'd utterly ruin the Cloathing Trade of *England*; and if nothing else can, that will convince *England*, when too late, that the Strength of the *English* Interest of *Ireland*, is the Bulwark of *England*, as to Foreign Invasions, and a violent wresting from them their Trade, &c.

If the honest Gentleman who wrote the above, were now living, the Reasons that then occur'd to him on that Occasion, wou'd at this Day appear to him in a much stronger Light, particularly respecting their Wool-len-Trade, being what he there chiefly Treats of.

I shan't at present enter into the Merit, how far the Restraints we lye under, in that as well as other particulars, may be contrary to the Right, naturally inherent in all Free-born People, Chargeable with no Crime 'gainst KING or COUNTRY; but this I'll venture to say, that some Restraints we labour under, are likely to prove, both to them and us, the Loss of the most valuable Branch of Trade we ever were possess'd of.

Your Linnen Trade (say some grave Politicians) makes Amends for ALL, and ought to stop your Mouths to all Complaints; but I wou'd beg Leave to say, and am sorry to think, That it is not so likely to prove a Trade of Inheritance to us (with Respect to Foreign Markets at least) as some do fondly imagine. For let our Linnen-Drapers or Merchants, (conversant in the Exportation of that Article, to any Part of Europe, except *England*,) give their Opinion. Also, if *England* shou'd only think proper, to take off the Duty of Ham-burgh, and all other Foreign Linnens, and admitt them Duty Free, as they do at present from *Ireland*. What wou'd be the Consequence, I am affraid, and have good Reason to believe, it wou'd amount to little less than a Prohibition upon us, in that only valuable Branch of our Trade, as it is demonstrable, that the Hamburgers, as well as other Northern Countries, do under sell us, nay, intirely cut us out of that Trade, in all other Markets in Europe.

* But as this may be the Subject of another Paper, and Foreign to the present. I shall now conclude, wishing that the Lord of Hosts may make us see our common Interest so far, as join Hand in Hand, against *France*, or any other Nation upon Earth, that wou'd Rival us in any one Branch of our Trade.

F I N I S.